

Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DOTE-00 NIC-01 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15

ACDA-19 IO-13 AID-20 PC-04 DRC-01 /168 W

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R 132245Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2446

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCSO

UNCLAS MANAGUA 3749

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ETRN NU

SUBJECT: BUS FARE INCREASES RESISTED

REF: MANAGUA 3690

1. SINCE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BUS FARE INCREASE IN MANAGUA SEPTEMBER 6, THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS INCIDENTS OF RESISTANCE. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS MEETINGS TO PLAN PROTESTS AGAINST THE ACTION HAVE BEEN HELD IN OUTLYING LOW INCOME COMMUNITIES. SEVERAL OF THESE HAVE BEEN BROKEN UP BY THE NATIONAL GUARD, AND SOME 40 PERSONS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED. IN SOME AREAS BARRICADES HAVE BEEN ERECTED IN THE PATH OF BUSES AND SEVERAL HAVE BEEN PELTED WITH BOTTLES AND ROCKS. DRIVERS REPORT NUMEROUS INCIDENTS OF TIRES BEING DEFLATED AND AT LEAST ONE DRIVER WAS ROUGHED UP BY AN ANGRY CROWD OF COMMUTERS.

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2. STUDENTS AT THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (UNAN) ARE ESPECIALLY ACTIVE IN PROTESTING THE FARE HIKE AND HAVE ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE CALLING FOR A BOYCOTT AND VIOLENT ACTION TO STOP BUS TRAFFIC. SEVERAL STUDENTS ARE AMONG THOSE ARRESTED. LABOR GROUPS ARE ALSO IN THE FOREFRONT IN PROTESTS AGAINST THE FARE INCREASE. BOTH THE FREE AND DEMOCRATIC (CUS) AND THE COMMUNIST DOMINATED (CGT-INDEPENDENT) LABOR CONFEDERATIONS HAVE DENOUNCED THE ACTION.

3. IN RESPONSE TO THIS WAVE OF PROTEST, THE NATIONAL GUARD HAS REPORTEDLY ASSIGNED SEVERAL HUNDRED MEN TO PROTECT BUSES, INCLUDING AGENTS IN CIVILIAN DRESS ABOARD THE VEHICLES. GENERAL SOMOZA ADDRESSED THE PROBLEM AT THE MEETING OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 10 STATING THAT THE FARE INCREASE HAD BEEN CAREFULLY STUDIED AND WOULD NOT BE RESCINDED. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE INCREASED COST OF TRANSPORTATION WOULD BE CONSIDERED IN THE GON'S REVIEW OF THE NEED FOR SALARY INCREASES ANNOUNCED AT HIS AUGUST 29 PRESS CONFERENCE. FOR THE TIME BEING, HOWEVER, HE TOOK A TOUGH STAND, "IF PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO PAY THE NEW RATE, THEN THEY CAN WALK."

4. AS A POSSIBLE SOLUTION, MANY OF THE PROTESTING GROUPS IN MANAGUA ARE ADVOCATING GOVERNMENT NATIONALIZATION OF THE BUS SYSTEM POINTING OUT THAT THE GON ALREADY OPERATES THE RAILROADS. THE POSSIBILITY OF NATIONALIZATION APPEARS, HOWEVER EXTREMELY REMOTE..
SHELTON

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NNN

Message Attributes

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